

DECCA
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★
**LOUIS
ARMSTRONG**
★
Classics



10 of Louis' most famous recordings—with vocal choruses and trumpet solos by Louis himself.

DECCA ALBUM No. 253 *Popular Series*

1788

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(61111)
Album No. 233
(10 sides-1)

Instrumental
Fox Trot

MAHOGANY HALL STOMP

(Spencer Williams)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
And His Orchestra

3793 A

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(65346)
Album No. 233
(10 sides-2)

Instrumental
Fox Trot

WEST END BLUES

(Clarence Williams-Joe Oliver)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
And His Orchestra

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(DLA 1085)
Album No. 233
(10 sides-3)

Fox Trot
Vocal Chorus by
Louis Armstrong

ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET

(Jimmy McHugh-Dorothy Fields)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
And His Orchestra

3794 A

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DLA 1085A

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(DLA 1134)
Album No. 233
(10 sides-5)

Instrumental
Fox Trot

STRUTTIN' WITH SOME BARBECUE

(Louis Armstrong)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
And His Orchestra

3795 A

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DLA 1134 A

DECCA

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(65460)
Album No. 233
(10 sides-6)

Fox Trot
Vocal Chorus by
Louis Armstrong

CONFESSIN'
That I Love You
(Daugherty-Reynolds-Neiburg)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
And His Orchestra

3795 B

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65460A

LOUIS ARMSTRONG CLASSICS

Al Fuldern on trombone. Nat Jaffe's piano takes the bridge. Then back comes the full band—changing key as it takes over from the piano—playing the way for the Armstrong trumpet. It's Louie on out, "playing all around it" and displaying his keen improvising talents with a sureness and attack which none of his colleagues can equal.

'Ain't Misbehavin'' was written as just another pop tune. But when Louis got hold of it, it became a classic. This record shows why.

COMPLETE LIST OF LOUIS ARMSTRONG DECCA RECORDS

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| LOUIS ARMSTRONG
(Ass't. by Harry Miller)
(Humorous Monologues)
15403 Elder Ealsmore's Sermon on Generosity
15043 Elder Ealsmore's Sermon on Throwing Stones | 1961 Let That Be a Lesson to You
3705 Long Long Ago
1842 Love Walked In
1843 You're My Love
824 Mahogany Hall Stomp
2338 Me and Brother Bill
1822 Mexican Swing
485 Music Goes Round and Around
1937 Naturally
3756 Now Do You Call That a Buddy
622 Old Man Mose
1868 Once in a While
1841 On the Sentimental Side
1500 On the Sunny Side of the Street
448 On Treasure Island
2613 Our Monday Date
18096 Perfidia Street Blues
3011 Four Old Joes
1347 Public Melody Number One
1347 Red Cap
1049 Red Nose
646 Red Sails in the Sunset
824 Rhythm Saved the World
685 Rhythm Saved the World
1332 Cui Ohi My Legs and Call Me a Liberty
18091 Down in Honky-Tonk Town
835 Ever'body
632 Falling in Love with You
579 Get a Bean 'New Bull
3092 Harlem Stomp
2463 Hear Me Talkin' To Ya
1263 Hey Cats' Ball
3753 Hey Lowdy Mama
797 I Come from a Musical Family
3780 I Cover the Waterfront
1636 I Double Date You
1481 It's a Good
906 If We Never Meet Again
574 I Hope Gabriel Likes Me
576 I'm in the Mood for Love
678 I'm Pining All My Eggs in One Basket
823 I'm Shouting Hgh
1841 It's Wonderful
1408 I've Got a Heart Full of Rhythm
1937 I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams
623 I've Got My Fingers Crossed
2207 Juggles Creepers
3336 Jubilee
3283 Lazy 'Bippi' Stomper | 1961 Let That Be a Lesson to You
3705 Long Long Ago
1842 Love Walked In
1843 You're My Love
824 Mahogany Hall Stomp
2338 Me and Brother Bill
1822 Mexican Swing
485 Music Goes Round and Around
1937 Naturally
3756 Now Do You Call That a Buddy
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3092 Harlem Stomp
2463 Hear Me Talkin' To Ya
1263 Hey Cats' Ball
3753 Hey Lowdy Mama
797 I Come from a Musical Family
3780 I Cover the Waterfront
1636 I Double Date You
1481 It's a Good
906 If We Never Meet Again
574 I Hope Gabriel Likes Me
576 I'm in the Mood for Love
678 I'm Pining All My Eggs in One Basket
823 I'm Shouting Hgh
1841 It's Wonderful
1408 I've Got a Heart Full of Rhythm
1937 I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams
623 I've Got My Fingers Crossed
2207 Juggles Creepers
3336 Jubilee
3283 Lazy 'Bippi' Stomper | 2934 You're a Lucky Guy
2934 You're Just a No Account
1358 Yours and Mine
3204 You Run Your Mouth
3204 I'll Run My Business
3092 You're Got Me Voodoo'd
LOUIS ARMSTRONG and THE MILLS BROTHERS
(Trumpet and Vocal Solos by Louis Armstrong)
3180 Boog It
1245 Carry Me Back to Old Virginia (Stand)
1800 Cherry
1245 Darling Nellie Gray (Hecky)
1676 Flat Foot Floogie
1485 In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree
3291 Marie
1852 My Walkin' Stick
1340 Old Fades at Home (Foster)
1992 Snow Is Ended
LOUIS ARMSTRONG with JIMMY DORSEY & His Orchestra
(Trumpet and Vocal Solos by Louis Armstrong)
705 Teas Except as Indicated
936 Dipper Mudd
1481 Hurdy Gurdy Man
15027 Pennies from Heaven—Vocal by Conity and Langford
15027 Pennies from Heaven—Medley—Vocal (with Conity & Langford)
945 Skeleton in the Closet
606 Swing That Music
3105 Swing That Music
1049 When Bubbe Swings the Cubes
LOUIS ARMSTRONG with Hawkins Ork. (Trumpet and Vocal Solos by L. Armstrong)
Vocal by Fox Trio
1216 Hawaiian Hospitality
914 On a Coconut Island
1216 On a Little Bamboo Bridge
914 To You, Sweetheart, Alkha
LOUIS ARMSTRONG with Decca Mixed Chorus
Directed by Lyn Murray
3095 Going to Shoot All Over God's Heaven
3103 Inch and the Whole
3085 Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen
1913 Shadrack |
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LOUIS ARMSTRONG Classics



STARRING
LOUIS ARMSTRONG
DECCA ALBUM No. 233
Popular Series

LOUIS ARMSTRONG CLASSICS

featuring

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

And His Orchestra

with Vocal Choruses and Trumpet Solos by
Louis Armstrong

DECCA ALBUM No. 233
COMPLETE ON FIVE TEN-INCH RECORDS

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Notes

By Dave Dexter, Jr.

(New York Editor, *Down Beat Magazine*)

There is no subject more controversial than hot jazz. Because of its many exponents, and because, as an art form, it invites countless commentators and devout followers, most of whom have conflicting tastes and standards by which jazz music, and jazz musicians can be equally judged, it is not often that they agree.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG CLASSICS

The single exception is Louis Armstrong. Louis is not merely a great jazz musician—he is jazz itself. Born in New Orleans on July 4, 1900, Louis got in on the ground floor and matured with the art as did no one else. His trumpet playing is faultless. His style of singing is absolutely unique. Unanimously, the critics agree on down to the second trumpet man in the gig band at the 711 Tap Room around the corner, on one personality. That personality, of course, is Louis Armstrong. Writing judiciously, it is safe to say that he above all others commands the most universal respect from an audience which has long been noted for its hyper-sensitivity and delight in arguing the respective merits and faults of all jazz musicians.

Louis came up the hard way, jailed by a New Orleans policeman one New Year's eve, when he was 13, Louis was placed in the colored Waif's Home "to keep him from running wild on the streets." His parents and younger sister, Beatrice, lived in the back-town part of New Orleans in what was referred to as "James Alley." Louis' father was a turpentine worker and his salary was hardly enough to support the family.

But young Louis learned to like the Waif's Home. He hadn't been there but a week when the boys started calling him "Gatemouth." Occasionally they'd alter it to "Satchelmouth" and laugh about its size. Later that nickname was to go around the world as a symbol of jazz music's outstanding good-will ambassador. Except time changed it to "Satchmo," a name which many call Louis today. Louis, at 13, knew that he was "in," and on the right track when the boys pinned the nickname on him. Unpopular boys never got tags like that.

Louis started studying cornet at the Waif's Home, in the orchestra, under the tutelage of Peter Davis. He had heard about Buddy Bolden's prowess as a trumpeter and he had heard of Freddy Keppard, and Willie (Bunk) Johnson, Buddy Peete and others now listed in the "immortals of jazz" classification. Louis spent a year and a half at the Home and learned to play trumpet. He caught on easily. It wasn't work. Louis from the day he learned to blow *Home Sweet Home* would rather blow than sleep.

Too young to occupy a chair in a band, Louis sold newspapers until he was 17. Then he met Joseph (King) Oliver, best of the Orleans brass men of that era. Oliver coached the boy and when the "King" left Ed (Kid) Ory's band to take his chances on being a success in Chicago, it was little Louis with his cheap cornet who got the call. He was 18 and thrilled to death. Moreover, his success with Ory led him to a better job with Fate Marable, whose band was (and still is) playing on steamboats on the Mississippi River out of New Orleans north. Two years of Louis' young life were spent with Marable and it was during this period that he made his greatest progress. The *Dave Belle* was the boat on which Marable and his band made the now-historic push up the river to St. Paul, only to arrive too late for the summer excursion boat dance season. But when Louis returned to his home again he had a wealth of experience, not the least important of which was his ability to read music, taught him by a melophone player with Marable, Davey Jones.

Late in 1922 Louis received a letter from Oliver, whose trip north had proved highly successful. The "King" was anxious for Louis to join him on cornet at the Lincoln Gardens in Chicago. Louis made his decision; he had confidence in his playing and he wanted to see more of the world outside of Orleans. He was quick to accept. And ever since, his name has been foremost in the annals of jazz.

Jobs with Fletcher Henderson's band in New York, at the Roseland, and with Erskine Tate, Carroll Dickerson and also with numerous studio bands (for recordings) followed in fast order. Finally Louis took over Luis Russell's entire band in early 1930. There's been no stopping him since. From New York to California, then to Europe, and back again to tour 40 states of the union, meanwhile making several motion pictures and scores of phonograph records under the guidance of Joe Glaser, his manager, brings the Armstrong story up to the present.

Louis started recording for Decca in 1935 and has been Decca's greatest *hot* artist from the start. Not only with his own band, but also with Jimmy Dorsey's, Glen Gray's, Andy Iona's, the Polynesian's and the Mills Brothers, as well as the Lyn Murray Chorus, has he made records for the blue and gold Decca label. Selecting ten of his very best performances could hardly be classified as "simple" work, interesting though it was. The discs in this collection, however, were chosen as the *most representative* of Louis' prolific recording career of the last five years.

In this group of classics Louis gets instrumental assistance from such highly regarded soloists as Jay C. Higginbotham, the trombonist; Charlie Holmes, on alto saxophone; Jimmy Dorsey, playing clarinet; Luis Russell, at the piano; Al Phillips, trombone; Nat Jaffe, piano; Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Bingie Madison, tenor sax and clarinet; George (Pop) Foster, bass violin, and "Big Sidney" Catlett, drums.

Finally, it is pleasing to note that Louis after 27 years of blowing a horn is still top man in the whole field of jazz, and that many more recordings of his genius are still to be made under his magic name. Many of his buddies are gone — Johnny Dodds, Joe Oliver, Jimmy Harrison, and others who worked alongside him in various groups down through the years. Unlike them, Louis can still do what he likes to do most — play his horn, and sing in that guttural but indescribably beautiful style which no living man has yet been able to imitate. The Armstrong future holds much, but it can hardly eclipse his brilliant past.

Notes on the individual records in this album follow.

Mahogany Hall Stomp

(Recorded May 18, 1936)

Personnel: Leonard Davis, Gus Atkins, Louis Bacon, *trumpets*; James Archey, Harry White, *trombones*; Bingie Madison, Greely Walton, *tenors*; Charlie Holmes, Henry Jones, *altos*; Luis Russell, *piano*; Leo (one of the few left-handed guitarists) Blair, *guitar*; Pop Foster, *bass*; Paul Barbarin, *drums*.

Easily the most colorful of all streets in the land of jazz is New Orleans' Basin Street, which at one time, in the period of 1905-1925, was the center

of a section of the city known as Storyville and bossed by a saloon-keeper named Tom Anderson. Charles Edward Smith, most noted of all jazz historians, was the first to reveal how Storyville figured in the birth and growth of American jazz music as we know it today in the book *Jazzmen* (Harcourt-Brace & Co.) which he co-authored with Frederic Ramsey, Jr. *

"Mahogany Hall was on Basin Street," Smith writes. "Its proprietor was Lulu White. She was called the 'Diamond Queen.' At Lulu's, the pianists at various times were Al Carrel, Richard M. Jones and Clarence Williams, who celebrated Lulu White's establishment in the tune *Mahogany Hall Stomp*. Also in the district were nine cabarets, many 'dance schools,' innumerable honky-tonks, barrel-houses, and gambling joints."

And it was just such an atmosphere that little Louis Armstrong lived in. In 1910, the time Smith writes about, Louis was 10 years old and running wild on the streets. It seems ironical that a quarter of a century later he would take Clarence Williams' musical portrait of Lulu White's "pleasure house" and record it with his own band, now a favorite of millions.

A four-bar full band intro is used to set the stage for Louis' initial solo offering. It's followed by full ensemble again, then the melody is picked up by the leader and dropped in time for brief but pleasant individual "go bits" by trombone and tenor sax. Then it's Louis again for the rest of the distance except for a flashy get-off, on alto, by the ever-consistent, always-entertaining Charlie Holmes, who left the Armstrong band in September of 1940 after serving as an important member of the group's reed section for some six years.

Don't miss the ending. It's simply the intro repeated, this time with the leader "in" on his trumpet.

West End Blues

(Recorded April 5, 1928)

Personnel: Shelton Hemphill, Bernard (Fuzzy) Flood, Henry (Red) Allen, *trumpets*; Rupert Cole, Charlie Holmes, *altos*; Bingie Madison, Joseph Garland, *tenors*; Luis Russell, *piano*; Leo Blair, *guitar*; George (Pop) Foster, *bass*; Sidney Catlett, *drums*; Wilbur De Paris, George Washington, Jay C. Higginbotham, *trombones*.

Joe (King) Oliver was Louis Armstrong's idol. "The biggest kick of my life," Louis wrote in his book *Swing That Music* in 1936, "was when 'Papa Joe' invited me to come up to his house and go to the store for his missus. He took such a liking to me he started giving me horn lessons and answered anything I wanted to know. He taught me the *modern* way of phrasing on the cornet and trumpet. . . . When people began to see big 'King' Oliver looking out for me and helping me they began to think maybe I could play pretty good."

Oliver, working with Clarence Williams, composed *West End Blues*. Louis started playing it when he was 17 years old and ever since then has kept the tune — an orthodox, non-commercial 12-bar blues — in his book. Louis first recorded *West End* in November of 1928, but if you catch

his band on a one-nighter some night you'll hear this version before the dance is over. The tempo is slow; the mood is indigo.

The side begins with an ad-libbed intro played by Louis himself. Behind him, as he concludes it, the band strikes a sustained chord. Back comes the leader, his eyes shut as he faces the mike, his handkerchief covering the shiny bell of his long trumpet. With intense feeling, as if he's recalling those early Orleans days when he sat at Joe Oliver's feet asking questions, Louis produces a magnificent chorus in which his improvisations run rampant, but always in impeccable taste. Softly in the background the saxes provide accompaniment not unlike the sound of a Negro choir. His contribution ended, Louis stands by while Lee Blair strums an eight-bar guitar interlude. By now Louis is back at the mike, humming, chanting, singing wordless sentences finally broken by a tasty four-measure Luis Russell piano break.

But the scene changes when Louis picks up his horn again and lets go with two sparkling solo choruses almost entirely different than his initial one which followed his flashy introduction. The whole band, seemingly sensing the change, starts riffing along. Louis slurs, bites and twists his notes, saying what he wants to say and letting his horn do it. There's a high note, sustained until just the right beat, then it's out with Sidney Catlett's cymbal echoing the full performance.

Seldom has a full band been able to record a blues so faithfully and sincerely as this. Rarely does a piece of machinery, a needle and a raw "human" obtain jazz of this calibre. *West End Blues* was pure luck. It's jazz which wasn't intended for the turntable, but for the back room of some small, smoke-filled, dimly-lighted room crowded with sweating musicians who are seeking to express something they can't put in words. *West End Blues* shows how Louis Armstrong feels about his friend and mentor, Papa Joe.

On the Sunny Side of the Street

(Recorded November 15, 1937)

Personnel for this and *Satchel Mouth Swing*: Shelton Hemphill, Louis Bacon, Henry (Red) Allen, *saxophone*; George Matthews, George Washington, Jay C. Hugginbotham, *trumpets*; Pete Clark, Bingie Madison, *trumpet*; Charlie Holmes, Albert Nicholas, *alto*; Luis Russell, *piano*; Lee Blair, *guitar*; George (Pop) Foster, *bass*; Jilly, Paul Barbarin, *drums*.

This is one of the few performances in this collection for which no "paper," or music manuscript, was used. On the day it was made in Decca's Los Angeles studios, Louis merely pointed his finger at his men and told them what to do. That's all they needed. Because when the buzzer sounded Jay Hugginbotham was standing with his golden trombone up front with a straight shot into the mike. Hear him go on the first chorus — which isn't even prefaced with the usual empty introduction — and feel his virile, gutty phrasing and hot, rich tone. It's all Higgy's up to the release (or "bridge") when Charlie Holmes comes ripping in with his alto for eight bars of solo. Higgy returns for the remainder of the initial chorus, Louis knocks off a satisfying vocal (listen for his leaky "no, sir" when he gives with "If I Never Have a Cent, I'd Be Rich as Rocke-

leller" line) and Charlie Holmes returns for four bars alone which sets it up for the Armstrong horn. On Louis' first chorus he goes about it very straight. Then as he builds up, warming to the theme, catch how the tension increases, how the rhythm section digs low and heavy, and how the ending climaxes a thoroughly relaxed and un-arranged performance of one of the grandest pop tunes (from the pen of Dorothy Fields and Jimmy McHugh) ever written.

On the Sunny Side of the Street, like *Confessin'* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, will go down as one of the really great "commercial" tune performances by Louis and his band. Even the tempo and general atmosphere are in the top-drawer class.

Satchel Mouth Swing

(Recorded January 12, 1938)

Personnel: Identically the same as for *On the Sunny Side of the Street*.

Here's a light, full-of-bounce tune written by Louis, his former wife Lillian Hardin Armstrong, and Clarence Williams, who will long be remembered for his *Baby, Won't You Please Come Home*, *Squeeze Me*, *Sister Kate*, *Gulf Coast Blues*, *You Don't Know My Mind* and countless other jazz masterpieces, almost all of them made famous by Armstrong's throaty singing and trumpet artistry. Taken at bright tempo, the first eight bars are by the full band which lead into the first chorus in which the entire group establishes the theme and melodic line. Louis appears in the second chorus notifying everyone that "ole Satchel's in the groove — ole Satchel's in the mood." Once again Charlie Holmes' alto and Jay Hugginbotham's trombone divide a chorus, then the full band returns to end the chorus and make way for Louis' trumpet.

Clearly and cleanly, playing flawlessly but nonetheless hot, Louis takes his horn solo standing up. The notes you anticipate never materialize because he's "way ahead and because his inventive mind never gets stuck for ideas. All of which leads into a tricky coda in which a series of sharp chord progressions backgrounds Armstrong's smash high-note ending. The beat is good. The material is tailor made. And the recording is excellent. *Satchel Mouth Swing* could hardly be played by any band except Louis' own.

Struttin' with Some Barbecue

(Recorded January 11, 1938)

Personnel: Luis Russell, *piano*; Shelton Hemphill, Louis Bacon, Henry (Red) Allen, *trumpets*; George Matthews, George Washington, Jay C. Hugginbotham, *trumpets*; Pete Clark, Bingie Madison, *trumpet*; Albert Nicholas, Charlie Holmes, *alto*; Lee Blair, *guitar*; George (Pop) Foster, *bass*; Paul Barbarin, *drums*.

Louis wrote this last stomp. And Louis plays it. Staring it off with an eight-measure intro, he introduces the theme in a confident but simple manner and follows up with a smashing, driving chorus which closes with the Armstrong horn, peculiarly enough, playing lead with the entire brass section! Not once in one hundred times will you find Louis leading his own brass team, in ensemble passages, as he does here. Even

his single bad note doesn't hurt things, because Bingie Madison, who ordinarily is a tenor sax soloist, takes off on clarinet.

Madison's first high note is flat but you can feel him fight to correct it when he returns a second later and smacks it on the nose. Charlie Holmes takes it away from Madison at this point, the release. His alto starts like Carter's but by the time he had his say it smacks of Hodges'. Louis is rarin' to go by the time Holmes has ended his bit and the final choruses, as played by Louis, offer a lesson to every student of the horn — play it hot, *ad lib* it your way, but keep it clean and forceful! Armstrong never fails on these points but at the same time he never consciously thinks of them. To him it is intuitive. Even now his playing goes back to the long hours of study at the Wall's Home. For a final kick on *Struttin' With Some Berberne*—which incidentally is, in itself, an excellent example of New Orleans style jazz—watch Louis reach up and strike that final note on the record. It's right there for him.

Confessin'

(Recorded April 23, 1930)

Personnel: Rupert Cole, Charlie Holmes, *alto*; Bingie Madison, Joseph Garland, *trumpet*; Shelton Hemphill, Bernard Flood, Henry (Red) Allen, *trumpets*; Wilbur De Paris, George Washington, Jay Higginbotham, *trombones*; Louis Russell, *piano*; Lee Blair, *guitar*; George (Pop) Foster, *bass*; Sidney Catlett, *drums*.

Eight measures of Charlie Holmes' alto sax, a full first chorus sung by Louis which ends with Jay Higginbotham ripping the melody right out of Armstrong's mouth with his lusty trombone, 18 bars of Louis' solo horn, a short and not-strong tenor contribution by Bingie Madison, and a blow-out coda by Louis, in which he runs up the "ladder" for the "big" note—that's *Confessin'* in a single paragraph.

Horace Gerlach once described Armstrong's improvising habits this way: "Each phrase," Gerlach wrote, "seems to lean and fall forward and, before it lapses into a resting position, to be lifted up and carried forward again. . . His improvisations may be tinted and edged by the song used in each case, but the definite original melody is lacking. . . *Confessin'* is a good example of this."

And *Confessin'* brings back old memories of Louis, playing with Lee Hite's Band at the then famous Cotton Club in Los Angeles. Lionel Hampton was the drummer in that unit, Hite tooted an alto sax, Jimmie Prince was the pianist and on trombone was Lawrence Brown, now a star with Duke Ellington. The time was 1930. Louis was hitting his peak as a public entertainer, but his most glorious days were still to come.

You can feel it with this, a later and more modern version, of the Daugherty-Reynolds-Neiburg smash hit.

Dipper Mouth

(Recorded August 7, 1936)

Personnel: Jimmy Dorsey, *clarinet*; Toots Camarata, George Thorpe, *trumpets*; Bobby Byrne, Lee Yank, Don Matteson, *trombones*; Fud Livingston, Jack Stacey, Skeets

Harhart, *sax*; Rowser (Doc) Hillmann, *guitar*; Jim (Slim) Telt, *bass*; Bobby Van Epps, *piano*; Ray McKinley, *drums*.

Louis Armstrong is at home with any type band, or music. He plays just as well with a group of white musicians as he does with his own group. *Dipper Mouth* shows Louis with the all-white Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra. The side was made in Los Angeles.

In July, 1922, a few days after his twenty-second birthday anniversary, young Louis pulled into Chicago's LaSalle Street depot. He was alone. And he was excited. For King Oliver had sent for him in New Orleans and it meant that he was about to have his first big chance to make good with a famous jazz band. Taking his bag to Thirty-first and Gordon, on the toddlin' town's south side, Louis that night became a member of the Oliver band at the old Lincoln Gardens, in its hey-day one of the brightest spots in Chicago's Black Belt. In the band at the time he joined it were, beside Oliver and himself, Warren (Baby) Dodds, drums; Honore Dutrey, trombone; the late Johnny Dodds, clarinet; William Johnson, bass horn; a pianist whose name he no longer recalls and a trumpet man whose place he was to take. Most of all of them, like himself, were from New Orleans.

Louis' genius wasn't long in being acclaimed. Soon he was rivaling his "boss" as a soloist. Also, at this time at the Gardens, Louis and Oliver collaborated on a fast, strictly New Orleans stomp they called *Dipper Mouth*. Later it became known as *Sugar Foot Stomp* but Louis himself, as well as others who were fortunate enough to hear the tune in its original form, preferred the original title. This record is it.

Dorsey's combination, at the time this was made, was playing Bing Crosby's *Kraft Music Hall* on N. B. C. Louis was making a movie. So both combined their talents to produce this startling new version of a song which has long been a favorite of all Armstrong followers—Dorsey included.

The band comes in the down beat and gets off to a jump start with Jimmy's clarinet weaving high above the punching, blasting brass team. Listen closely for the fine lead horn of Salvador (Toots) Camarata, who today does virtually all the arrangements for the older of the brothers Dorsey. Two full choruses go by before Louis appears with his horn. Attempting to describe his work on a tune such as *Dipper Mouth*, which is so perfectly suited to his treatment, is not only difficult but impractical. Only one other living musician can handle it, and Muggsy Spanier learned how straight from Louis himself hanging around the Oliver and Armstrong bandstands in Chicago.

So the solo is there—full choruses—and you can judge it yourself. It stops only for Ray McKinley's traditional "Oh play that thing" outburst, apparently a "must" on every *Dipper Mouth* and *Sugar Foot* discing. Jimmy hops back into the mix with his clarinet. By all means listen for the sudden pickup—hypodermic—of the rhythm section when Louis comes on with his trumpet. Ray McKinley's beat has never been more solid.

I'm in the Mood for Love

(Recorded October 3, 1935)

Personnel: Leonard Davis, Gus Atkins, Louis Bacon, *trumpets*; James Archey, Harry White, *trumpets*; Greenly Walton, Bingie Madison, *trumpet*; Henry Jones, Charlie Holmes, *alto*; Luis Russell, *piano*; Paul Barbarin, *drums*; Lee Blair, *guitar*; George (Pop) Foster, *bass*.

With a mute stuck in the bell of his horn, Louis forsakes the customary intro to go right into the opening chorus. From the first beat of the first measure, the side is all Armstrong's. Checking from a vocal standpoint, *I'm in the Mood For Love* reveals the real beauty of his voice, its warmth, and expressiveness, and how he uses it precisely as though he were playing his trumpet.

Louis might have never become noted for his singing had not a young white boy, hanging around the bandstand at the Sunset in Chicago in the middle 1920's, suggested that he try using it on the lyrics of pop tunes of the day. The boy was Francis (Muggsy) Spanier, who since those early days on Chicago's south side has become probably the greatest of white horn soloists. Muggsy idolized the Armstrong horn. Tommy Ladnier, too, inspired the young Chicago student. But as Muggsy says today, "Louis was my man from the start. He's the only one that counts."

Louis took "Kid Muggsy's" advice and by the time he recorded *Heebie Jeebies* for the first time he had it down pat.

Following the vocal here, Louis drops the mute and goes "on out" with open horn, the purity and richness of his tone equalled only by his rhapsodic phrasing and gentle fingering nuances common only to himself. The coda brings to an end a thoroughly enjoyable performance of what ordinarily would have been "just another pop." But not a "pop" as he interprets it.

I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby

(Recorded June 25, 1936)

Personnel: Sid Stoneburn, *clarinet*; Bob Cusumano, John McGee, Jr., *trumpets*; Al Philburn, *trumpet*; Nat Jaffee, *piano*; Dave Barbour, *guitar*; Haig Stephens, *bass*; Sam Weiss, *drums*.

An all-white band is heard behind Louis here. It includes Johnny McGee and Bob Cusumano, trumpets; Sid Stoneburn, clarinet; Al Philburn, trombone; Nat Jaffee, piano; Dave Barbour, guitar; Haig Stephens, bass; and Sam Weiss on drums. It sounds white from the start—the intro is easily the most "un-Armstrongish" phrase in this entire album—but the moment Louis enters to sing the lyrics, on the opening chorus, things become interesting.

The vocal itself is a gem. Hot, distinctively phrased and clearly enunciated, it ends to make way for an ensemble chorus during which Stoneburn's stick weaves in and out. Sixteen measures later Louis breaks through with his bell wide open. That's when the climax begins. For the trumpet solo is so typically Armstrong it can be heard scores of times without becoming trite.

Once when a scholarly reporter for a music magazine stepped up and very seriously asked Fats Waller what "swing music" was, and how it could be defined, Fats slowly turned his head away from the keyboard, ran his eyes up and down the gentleman's body, and gruffly retorted, "Man, if you don't know what 'swing music' is by now you got no business messin' with it."

That's precisely the way one feels trying to describe Louis Armstrong's trumpet playing. The connoisseur instinctively recognizes the Armstrong genius, and the way that that genius is manifested in melody. There are many great personalities in jazz music. Many of them employ unique styles. But none has approached Louis' His vibrato, his touch, his ear, his unpredictable, uncharitable sense of improvisation—they all combine to place him above his colleagues.

Listen to his full horn chorus on *I Can't Give You* closely. Hear his last note—held for four full bars—clear and sharp. That's Louis.

Ain't Misbehavin'

(Recorded June 24, 1936)

Personnel: The complete all-white, comprises Bob Cusumano, Johnny McGee, *trumpets*; Sid Stoneburn, *clarinet*; Al Philburn, *trumpet*; Nat Jaffee, *piano*; Dave Barbour, *guitar*; Sammy Weiss, *drums*; and Haig Stephens, *bass*. That's right, no saxes.

Back in 1929 Louis Armstrong was the "top man" with Carroll Dickerson's band at the Savoy Ballroom in Chicago. Also in the group at the time were Zutty Singleton, drums; Crawford Worthington, lead alto; Fred Robinson, trombone; Gene Anderson, piano; Homer Hobson, second trumpet; Jimmy Strong, tenor sax; Bernard Curry, third alto; Pete Briggs, tuba; Mancy Carr, banjo; and Dickerson, on violin. A few months after Louis left Clarence Jones' Metropolitan Theater orchestra and was adding to his fame on the city's south side he and the rest of Dickerson's men found themselves out of jobs. The Savoy folded suddenly and couldn't pay off.

Louis was too big a man to go without work. And the band was too popular to suffer a lay-off. So each of the boys clipped a \$20 apiece, piled into four motor cars owned by various members of the group, and headed for New York. Less than a month after they hit the Big Town Dickerson and his men landed a spot in the all-colored, tremendously popular *Hot Chocolates* musical revue which held forth at the Hudson Theatre on Broadway. It was in this show that Armstrong introduced *Ain't Misbehavin'*, playing a trumpet solo in the high register.

"I wood-shedded it until I could play all around it," Louis recalls. "Because for the musicians and me it was one of those tunes you could cut loose and swing with. I believe that song, and the chance I got to play it, did a lot to make me better known all over the country."

Written by Fats Waller and Harry Brooks, *Ain't Misbehavin'* shows Louis in his natural, carefree groove, both from an instrumental and vocal standpoint. At bright—but not fast—tempo, the side opens with a four-bar full band introduction which gives way to the leader's vocal chorus. The second chorus is by the full band with brief outbursts by

